

Extended Employment Rule Change – Frequently Asked Questions

Why is the EE Rule being updated/ revised?

The Extended Employment funding rule provides state funding for long-term support services — including job supports for competitive employment, community employment, and workshop-based jobs — to help persons with significant disabilities stay working. The rule was last changed in 1998. Since then, there has been a greater interest by persons with disabilities and families/guardians for work in competitive jobs.

How we look at employment is changing. Two key factors are the Minnesota Olmstead Plan, which asks all agencies to support the Employment First Policy, and the federal Workforce Investment and Opportunity Act, which became law in 2015. With the proposed changes, more individuals will receive help to keep everyday jobs in businesses in their hometowns. The funding rule is being changed to fit with what is happening around the nation and across the state.

What are the major changes being proposed?

The current model, which pays an employment service provider for the hours people actually work, will not change. But several significant changes are being proposed:

- *Extended Employment funding for center-based employment (workshops) will be phased out*
- *The rule will limit (or cap) funds for non-competitive employment to the amount available based on the first year the rule operates*
- *The rule will require stronger, more consistent informed choice processes*
- *The rule will direct unused dollars to providing employment supports for competitive employment*

What's going to happen to center- based employment?

➤ *If I'm currently in center-based employment what's going to happen to me?*

➤ *What resources will be available to me?*

Extended employment funding for center-based employment will be phased out. Community rehabilitation programs can offer center-based options if they find other funding resources. (Extended Employment funding has never provided sufficient funds to cover all costs for center based work.)

Each year, if you are not working competitively, your employment service provider will have an “Informed Choice” review to provide information about jobs in the community and help you find out about other jobs that you may want to be doing. This may include help from the county and vocational rehabilitation services and the community rehabilitation provider that employs you.

What is the timeline for the proposed changes?

Extended Employment funding for center-based employment will be phased out within five years after the rule changes are in place. The first two years will see some funding reduced and then it will be greater in the last three years. All other proposed changes will take place the first year that the new rules are in place.

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